

PROCEDURE 25 - Ergonomics

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Synopsis

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidance relative to ergonomic workplace hazards. The procedure applies to all NWS facilities, work locations, and employees.

Initial Implementation Requirements:

- **Analyze Site Operations versus Procedure Requirements**
 - Optimum Workstation Seating. (25.5.2d, 25.3.2a)
 - Optimum Workstation Surfaces. (25.5.2d, 25.3.2b)
 - Suitable Computer Monitors. (25.5.2d, 25.3.2c)
 - Wrist Rest or Wrist Support. (25.5.2d, 25.3.2d.2)
 - Adequate Lighting. (25.5.2d, 25.3.2d.3)
 - Routine Lifting Tasks. (25.3.3)
- **Develop/Obtain Documentation/Information required for Site**
 - Document Findings and Corrective Actions. (25.3.4)
- **Designate Person to Administer Ergonomics Procedure Requirements**
- **Provide Local Training of Site Personnel**

Recurring and Annual Task Requirements:

- **Review/Update Documentation/Information required for Site**
 - Maintain Findings and Corrective Actions Documentation. (25.3.4)
- **Inspect/Replace/Recalibrate/Maintain Material/Equipment**
 - Optimum Workstation Seating. (25.5.2d, 25.3.2a)
 - Optimum Workstation Surfaces. (25.5.2d, 25.3.2b)
 - Suitable Computer Monitors. (25.5.2d, 25.3.2c)
 - Wrist Rest or Wrist Support. (25.5.2d, 25.3.2d.2)
 - Adequate Lighting. (25.5.2d, 25.3.2d.3)

Ergonomics Checklist

REQUIREMENTS	EHB 15 Reference	YES	NO	N/A	Comments
Is initial and annual review of this procedure conducted and documented?	25.4.2				
Are employees ergonomics-related concerns evaluated?	25.3.4				
Are ergonomics-related findings and corrective actions being thoroughly documented?	25.3.4				
Do employees who exhibit physical symptoms consult a qualified medical professional?	25.3.4				
Do workstations provide optimum seating as described in the procedure?	25.3.2a				
Do workstations provide optimum worktable surfaces as described in this procedure?	25.3.2b				
Are guidelines for efficient use of monitors followed?	25.3.2c				
Are guidelines for lighting levels and designs in work areas followed?	25.3.2d.3 &				
Do routine lifting tasks conform to the guidelines referenced in this procedure?	25.3.3				

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25 **ERGONOMICS**

25.1 **Purpose And Scope**

As part of its goal to provide a safe and healthful workplace, the National Weather Service (NWS) is promulgating this procedure related to ergonomic workplace hazards. This procedure applies to all NWS facilities, work locations, and employees.

25.2 **Definitions**

ACGIH. American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists.

ANSI. American National Standards Institute.

Qualified Individual - An individual who, on the basis of professional training or experience, is qualified to analyze an NWS workstation for compliance with accepted ergonomics principles and who is capable of recommending corrective actions for noted deficiencies. Training courses dealing with ergonomics are available from numerous organizations, such as the American Society of Safety Engineers, American Industrial Hygiene Association, the National Safety Council, etc.

Field Office. A Field Office may include the following: Weather Forecast Office (WFO), River Forecast Center (RFC), Weather Service Office (WSO), and a Data Collection Office (DCO).

IES. Illumination Engineering Society.

NIOSH. National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health.

Operating Unit. For the purpose of this procedure, Operating Unit includes the National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP), National Data Buoy Center (NDBC), NWS Training Center (NWSTC), National Reconditioning Center (NRC), Radar Operations Center (ROC), or the Sterling Research & Development Center (SR&DC).

OSHA. Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Station Manager. For the purpose of this procedure, the Station Manager shall be either the NWS Regional Director; Directors of Centers under NCEP (Aviation Weather Center, NP6; Storm Prediction Center, NP7; and Tropical Prediction Center, NP8); Directors of the NDBC, NWSTC, and Chiefs of NRC, ROC and SR&DC facilities; or Meteorologist in Charge (MIC), Hydrologist in Charge (HIC), or Official in Charge (OIC).

TLV. ACGIH Threshold Limit Value, representing conditions under which it is believed that nearly all workers may be repeatedly exposed to day after day without adverse health effects.

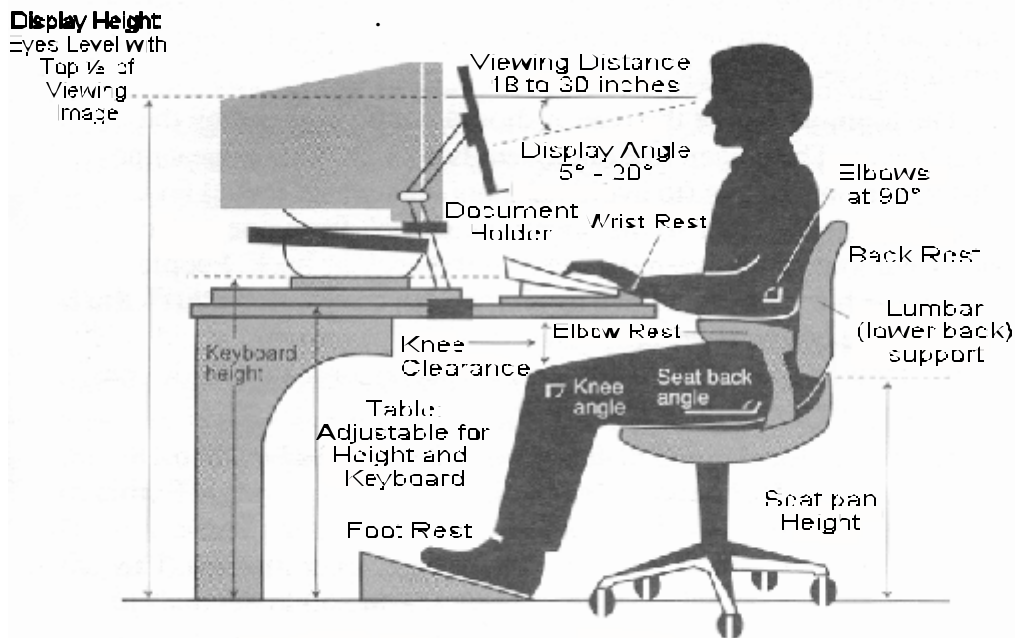
25.3 Procedure

25.3.1 Employee computer workstations should be designed to the greatest extent feasible to fit the employees using them. (See Figure 25-1 for illustration)

a. Optimum workstation seating includes:

- (1) Seat height range from 16 to 20.5 inches from the floor.
- (2) The seat tilt range of 0 to 10 degrees.
- (3) Seat constructed of material not conducive to sliding.
- (4) Seat size of at least 18 inches wide, with a depth of 15-17 inches.
- (5) Adjustable back rest to provide support to the lumbar region of the

Figure 1: Typical Ergonomically Designed Workstation



- (6) A minimum of five casters to support the chair.

b. Optimum worktable surfaces are:

- (1) Adjustable to reduce the need for adjustment of individual components, such as keyboards and monitors.
 - (2) Large enough to permit components to be moved forward and backward, while allowing room for a wrist rest and working documents.
- c. Monitor use can be made most efficient by:
- (1) Placing the monitor on articulating platforms, which allow adjustability in all directions.
 - (2) Setting monitor so that there is minimal forward tilt of the head.
 - (3) Ensuring that the top of the monitor is never be higher than eye level.
 - (4) Allowing for vertical adjustment of the monitor.
 - (5) Placing monitor so that it can be adjusted from 18 to 30 inches from the operator's eyes.
 - (6) Using a monitor that is tiltable to reduce glare and reflection. A clean screen will give off less glare.
- d. Miscellaneous:
- (1) Articulating arms which attach to the chair or worktable and allow a large number of work positions are recommended where extensive keyboard work is required.
 - (2) Wrist rests or wrist supports can reduce spinal disc pressure, alleviate shoulder muscle fatigue, and decrease wrist extension. These are low-cost items that can easily be added to most work stations.
 - (3) Excessive light levels should be avoided to reduce glare and eye fatigue. Workstations should be placed at 90 degrees from light sources, including all windows.
 - (4) Fatigue and excessive repetition can be avoided by:
 - a. changing work tasks at least once each hour.
 - b. standing up, stretching, flexing muscles, rotating the head, and shifting the body's position every 15 minutes. Also, eyes can be rested by briefly closing them or changing focus by looking at distant objects.

- c. using a soft touch on the keyboard and keeping the shoulders, hands and fingers relaxed.
 - d. using a document holder, positioned at about the same plane and distance as the display screen.
- 25.3.2 Routine lifting tasks should follow the guidelines listed in the NIOSH publication, "Applications Manual for the Revised Lifting Equation." The publication is used to analyze particular tasks and determine a maximum permissible load and lifting frequency.
- 25.3.3 All employee ergonomics-related concerns should be evaluated by the Station Manager or his/her designee (Qualified Individual) in conjunction with the Regional or Operating Unit Environmental/Safety Coordinator or the NOAA Regional Safety Manager (RSM). All findings and corrective actions should be thoroughly documented and maintained. When employees exhibit physical symptoms, a qualified medical professional should be consulted.

25.4 Quality Control

25.4.1 Regional or Operating Unit Environmental/Safety Coordinators

- a. Shall perform an annual assessment of the regional headquarters facilities or operating unit to monitor and promote compliance with the requirements of this procedure.
- b. Shall perform assessments or designate personnel to perform assessments of all field offices to monitor and promote compliance with the requirements of this procedure every two years.

25.4.2 Station Manager

Shall review or delegate review, of this procedure on an annual basis to ensure that the facility is complying with its requirements. Confirmation of this review shall be forwarded to the Regional or Operating Unit Environmental/Safety Coordinator.

25.4.3 NWS Headquarters (NWSH)

- a. The NWS Safety Office shall perform an annual assessment of the NWSH facilities to ensure that the facilities are in compliance with this procedure.
- b. The NWSH Safety Office shall periodically perform an assessment of the regional headquarters and field offices to ensure compliance with this procedure. The frequency of these regional and field office assessments shall be determined by the NWSH Safety Office.

- c. Requests for clarification concerning this procedure shall be directed to the NWSH Safety Office.

25.5 Responsibilities

25.5.1 Regional or Operating Unit Environmental/Safety Coordinators*

Shall monitor and coordinate to promote compliance with the requirements of this procedure for the regional headquarters, and field offices or operating units.

25.5.2 Station Manager*

- a. Shall have oversight over the implementation of this procedure, and ensure that the requirements of this procedure are followed by individuals at the NWS facility.
- b. Shall assume the duties of or designate a person to serve as Ergonomics Program Manager.
- c. Shall ensure that all ergonomics-related problems are investigated and that all needed corrective actions are implemented.
- d. Shall ensure that employee work stations are designed and maintained in accordance with the latest ergonomic principles to the greatest extent feasible.

25.5.3 Safety or Environmental/Safety Focal Point*

Shall ensure that any responsibilities delegated to them by the Station Manager are implemented in accordance with the requirements of this procedure.

25.5.4 Employees

- a. Individual employees affected by this procedure are required to read, understand and comply with the requirements of this procedure.
- b. Report unsafe or unhealthful conditions and practices to their supervisor or safety focal point.

NOTE: * Reference WSOM Chapter A-45 for complete list of responsibilities.

25.6 References

Incorporated References. The following list of references is incorporated as a whole or in part into this procedure. These references can provide additional explanation or guidance for the implementation of this procedure.

- 25.6.1 American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists, Threshold Limit Values for Chemical Substances and Physical Agents, Current Edition. The Illuminating Engineering Society/American National Standards Institute, IES/ANSI
- 25.6.2 RP-1-1982, Office Lighting, American National Standard Practice The Illuminating Engineering Society/American National Standards Institute, IES/ANSI
- 25.6.3 RP-7-1991, American National Standard Practice for Industrial Lighting. Occupational Safety and Health, NIOSH Applications Manual for the Revised Lifting Equation.
- 25.6.4 Working with Safety Video Display Terminals, OSHA Publication 3092

Additional information can be found at the following Internet websites:

<http://www.osha-slc.gov/SLTC/ergonomics/index.html>
<http://www.osha-slc.gov/SLTC/ergonomics/ergoreg.html>
<http://www.osha-slc.gov/SLTC/ergonomics/backgroundinfo.html>
<http://www.osha-slc.gov/SLTC/ergonomics/publicationsnew.html>
<http://www.osha-slc.gov/Publications/Osha3092.pdf>
<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/ergosci1.html?>
<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/eptolbox.html?>

25.7 Attachments

None